

It's all about the NUMBERSí í ..

There are a lot of numbers on our cars. They all mean something to somebody. It might be the person assembling the car that needs to install a part with a particular number, according to the assembly sheet. It might be the final inspector that needs to make sure the car has all the components required according to the assembly sheets. It might be the policeman that is checking the VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) to see if the car he is checking is stolen or wanted for some reason. All of the numbers mean something to somebody for some reason.

The VIN on your car is a series of numbers and letters that tell a lot about the car. It tells the style of body, the model year of the car, where it was built, and in some cases the particular engine installed in the car. Over the years, the VIN has changed. It is increasingly difficult to decode this information. I would like to offer information as to how you can decode your VIN. Since this is a Hurst/Olds magazine I am going to focus on only the Hurst/Olds VIN's.

There are some numbers and letters that are consistent in all of our VIN's. The variable is the location in the VIN. The number 3 is the designation for the Oldsmobile Division of General Motors. All Hurst/Olds were built at the Lansing assembly plant. The Lansing plant is designated as M for Michigan. This designation is also in all of our VIN's. Now I will sort out the changes from year to year.

1968

3 4 4 8 7 8 M 3 6 8 5 0 9

3- designates Oldsmobile Division
44- designates the 442-hardtop body style
87- designates Holiday coupe, a 2-door hardtop, (you could also have a 877 which is Sports Coupe, a 2-door post coupe)
8- designates the year, 1968
M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
These last **6 numbers** are actually the sequential numbers of the first production built 1968 Hurst/Olds. These numbers are assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1969

3 4 4 8 7 9 M 1 2 3 4 5 6

3- designates Oldsmobile Division
44- designates the 442-hardtop body style
87- designates Holiday coupe, a 2-door hardtop,
9- designates the year, 1969
M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
The last **6 numbers** are a production sequential number assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1972

3 J 5 7 U 2 M 1 2 3 4 5 6

3- designates Oldsmobile Division
J- designates the Supreme body style
57- designates the hardtop coupe. (You could also have a 67 which designates a convertible.)
U- designates the 455cid engine with a 400 automatic transmission. (Some W30 Hurst/Olds were built, they would have an X code. These are extremely rare.)
2- designates the year, 1972
M- designates Michigan
The last **6 numbers** are a production sequential number assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1973

3 G 3 7 U 3 M 1 2 3 4 5 6

3- designates Oldsmobile Division
G- designates the Cutlass S body style
37- designates the 2-door
U- designates the engine as a 455cid, with a 400 automatic transmission and dual exhaust system.
3- designates the year, 1973
M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
The last **6 numbers** are a production sequential number assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1974

3 G 3 7 K 4 M 1 2 3 4 5 6

- 3- designates Oldsmobile Division
 - G- designates the Cutlass S body
 - 37- designates the 2-door
 - K- designates the base 350cid engine. (You could also have had an **M** designating the 350cid with dual exhaust or **V** for the W30, 455cid engine option.)
 - 4- designates the model year, 1974
 - M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
- The last **6 numbers** are a production sequential number assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1975

3 J 5 7 K 5 M 1 2 3 4 5 6

- 3- designates Oldsmobile Division
 - J- designates the Cutlass Supreme body
 - 57- designates the 2-door Supreme or Salon
 - K- designates the W25, 350cid engine. (You could also have had a **T** for the W30, 455cid engine.
 - 5- designates the model year, 1975
 - M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
- The last **6 numbers** are a production sequential number assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1979

3 K 4 7 R 9 M 1 2 3 4 5 6

- 3- designates Oldsmobile Division
 - K- designates the Cutlass Calais body
 - 47- designates the 2-door Calais or Supreme
 - R- designates the W30, 350cid engine
 - 9- designates model year 1979
 - M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
- The last **6 numbers** are a production sequential number assigned as the car went down the assembly line.

1983

1 G 3 A K 4 7 9 0 D M 3 1 7 4 3 2

- 1- designates USA built
 - G- designates General Motors Corporation
 - 3- designates Oldsmobile Division
 - A- designates non-passive/active seatbelts
 - K- designates the Cutlass Calais
 - 47- designates 2-door
 - 9- designates the W40, 307cid engine
 - 0- no designation. This could be any number, it is a factory check digit.
 - D- designates the model year. In 1980 they started using the alphabet. 1980-A, 1981-B, etc.
 - M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
- The last **6 numbers** (317432) are actually the sequential numbers of the first 1983 H/O.

1984

1 G 3 A K 4 7 9 0 E M 3 7 9 4 6 3

- 1- designates USA built
 - G- designates General Motors Corporation
 - 3- designates Oldsmobile Division
 - A- designates non-passive/active seatbelts
 - K- designates the Cutlass Calais
 - 47- designates 2-door
 - 9- designates the W40, 307cid engine
 - 0- no designation. This could be any number, it is a factory check digit
 - E- designates the model year.
 - M- designates the assembly plant, Michigan
- The last **6 numbers** (379463) are actually the sequential numbers of the first 1984 H/O.

The examples I used are for the basic production Hurst/Olds cars. I did not breakdown the special pace car use vehicles, the prototype cars or the Hurst/Aero cars. The VIN is located on the driver's side and viewed through the windshield. VIN break-down for all Oldsmobile models can be found in the Oldsmobile chassis manuals. The Chassis Manual and Fisher Body manuals are very useful for repairs and information. These can be found at swap meets, literature dealers (see the classifieds), and the R.E.Olds Museum has some available (517-372-0529).